(c) whether small projects in backward areas in Rajasthan would be taken up first to start with; and

(d) by when a start in this behalf is likely to be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Keeping in view the limited resources for the purpose and huge investment involved, the Government intended to selectively involve the private sector for taking up selected byepasses around big cities, expressways, new bridges and widening of existing National Highways. For this purpose, suitable proposals were invited from the private sector. Selection of schemes and amount to be invested were left to the private parties.

A few private parties have come forward with their proposals for financing the highway projects. They have, however, raised certain issues of concession, loans and guarantees etc. which require examination with other Ministries. Road building under this scheme can be taken up only thereafter and it is too early to indicate the date of start of the scheme.

The State Govts. have also been requested to take suitable steps for involving private sector in financing State Roads.

Declaration of Narmada and Tapti rivers as National Waterways

1066. SHRI VITHALBHAI MOTIRAM PATEL: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Gujarat Government has urged the Central Government to declare Narmada and Tapti rivers as National Waterways;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the National Transport Policy Committee has suggested ten waterways including the Narmada and the Tapti rivers; and

(c) what are the reasons that neither Narmada nor Tapti rivers of Gujarat have so far been included in the list of National Waterways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The ten important waterways identified for being considered for declaration as National Waterways include river Narmada and Tapti also. For the declaration of a waterway as national waterway, the techno-economic studies are pre-requisites. Keeping in view the limited resources for undertaking these studies the Working Group set up by the Planning Commission for formulation of 7th Five Year Plan proposals had recommended only five waterways for declaration as national waterways which do not include the river Narmada and Tapti.

Shipbuilding yard during the Seventh Plan

1067. SHRI VITHALBHAI MOTIRAM PATEL: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the working group has proposed a shipbuilding yard be set up in the Seventh Five Year Plan period;

(b) if so, what are the recommendations of the group; and

(c) what decision Government have taken on the proposals of the group?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) Keeping in view the gap between the demand and indigenous installed capaciy in the large ocean-going sector, Working Group to formulate proposals for the Seventh Plan had proposed establishment of a new shipyard in the country at an

estimated cost of Rs. 210 crores of which the Seventh Plan outlay would be Rs. 75 crores.

(c) Owing to the continued recession in the shipping industry and also on account of financial constraints, the scheme has not been included in the Seventh Plan.

Development of Minor Ports

1068. SHRI VITHALBHAI MOTIRAM: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Harbour Board has recommended 100 per cent Central Loan assistance for development of Minor Ports;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government of Gujarat has requested for Central Loan for the development of Minor Ports; and

(c) what is the reaction of the Union Government on the request of the Government of Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) No Sir.

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) Rs. 20 crores has been approved by Planning Commission for Central Assistance for development of minor ports during the VIIth Five Year Plan. A Sub-Group of the Working Group on the Port Sector has been constituted to go into the allocation of these funds for development of certain specified ports, including those sent by the Gujurat State Government.

EMU trains for the Ahmedabad-Baroda-Surat Section

1069. SHRI VITHALBHAI MOTIRAM PATEL: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Gujarat has urged the Central Government for running EMU trains on the Ahmedabad-Baroda-Surat section; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Railways have at present no plans to run EMUs on Ahmedabad-Baroda-Surat section.

Box 'N' Type Wagons

1070. SHRI VITHALBHAI MOTIRAM PATEL: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are complaints about the actaul weighment of Box 'N' wagon's supply for coal;

(b) what is the nature of the complaints received from the consumers regarding Box 'N' wagons; and

(c) what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Some representations have been received that in respect of collieries served by South Eastern Railway, it is not possible to load coal in Box 'N' wagons to the extent of their marked carrying capacity. Some representations have also been received that these wagons are not being weighed, and that free time for loading and unloading of Box 'N' wagons is not adequate.

(c) Pending further trials, a reduced minimum weight for charge of 55 tonnes for slack coal and 54 tonnes for steam coal was notified as against marked carrying capacity of 58.81 tonnes, in respect of coal loaded from the collieries on the South Eastern Railway.